

Telescope type storage box with removable supporting tray-plate

for the conservation and storage of shoes, a report by Univ.-Ass. Dipl.-Rest. (FH) Tanja Kimmel, Museum of Fine Arts, Vienna



Description:

Among the wardrobe of the Austrian Order of the Iron Crown, ten pairs of shoes made of white velvet with blue satin rosettes and silver fringes have been preserved. They were manufactured around 1816/17 following the designs of the Costume Director of the Court's Theater, Philipp von Stubenrauch. The shoes have a special value within the Department of Court Uniforms, as they are the only footwear having outlasted the centuries among the splendid regalia of the Austrian Orders. Due to the fragile nature of the shoes and their importance to the collection, the primary aim of the conservation project was to prepare them for long term storage, display and handling by specialists and museum staff. (picture 1, above left)

Once the condition was documented, the arbitrarily mixed shoes needed to be correctly re-matched, according to their measurements, patterns and to the wearer's information. After surface cleaning, creases and wrinkles could be reduced by direct humidification using an ultrasonic humidifier. To prevent further loss of material, damaged edgings and seams were covered with custom dyed silk crepeline and hand sewn to the unstable parts. Loose rosettes were re-attached to the shoes, and missing laces replaced by new ones in the matching color. The inner stuffing of acid-free tissue was replaced by custom made forms to provide appropriate support in storage and display. The internal support forms consisted of two parts made of cotton stockinette, polyester wadding and Plastazote®. For those shoes being exhibited, the forms were additionally covered with cream silk jersey. For storage and transport a two-piece telescope type storage box with base and lid was designed in close cooperation with the company KLUG-CONSERVATION. The KS 16 Box is made of archival board material. It disposes of a drop-front on the lean end of the box in order to remove a separate supporting board. For easier handling, the drop-front and the lean ends of the lid were provided with finger holes and a cotton strap was attached to the supporting board. (pictures 2 and 3)



Description:

To hold the stored shoes securely in place, PE-foam was crafted on the supporting board. For economic use of material, Ethafoam® was cut in two pieces according to the shape of the handmade shoes and glued to the board with acrylic adhesive (Lascaux 360 HV). The raw edges of the custom made mounts were serged with unbleached cotton tape in order to prevent damage through abrasion. (above pictures 4, 5 and 6)

The exemplarily designed KS 16 box, developed in close cooperation with the company KLUG-CONSERVATION, is meanwhile also being used for the storage of other shoes within the collection.

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